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Boston. Second Church.

The historical and other
records belonging to the
Second Church Boston.



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PRESENTED BY

THE
HISTORICAL AND OTHER RECORDS

BELONGING TO

The Second Church in Boston

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Historical Tablets

IN THE CHAPEL OF THE SECOND CHURCH.

SECOND CHURCH gathered and House of Worship built in North Square, 1649; burnt, 1676; rebuilt, 1677; taken down for fuel by British troops, 1775. Society occupied the New Brick in Hanover Street, 1779, till it was demolished, 1844. New Church in Hanover Street dedicated, 1845; sold, 1849. Freeman Place Chapel purchased, 1850; sold, 1854. Meeting House of the Church of the Saviour, in Bedford Street, purchased, 1854; taken down and land sold, 1872. Corner-stone of the adjoining Church laid Sept. 17, 1873; Church dedicated Nov. 4, 1874. This Chapel dedicated Feb. 15, 1874.

Pastors.

JOHN MAYO. Ordained Nov. 9, 1655. Resigned 1673.

INCREASE MATHER. Ordained May 27, 1664. Died Aug. 23, 1723.

COTTON MATHER. Ordained May 13, 1683. Died Feb. 13, 1728.

JOSHUA GEE. Ordained Dec. 18, 1723. Died May 22, 1748.

SAMUEL MATHER. Ordained June 21, 1732. Dismissed Dec. 21, 1741.

SAMUEL CHECKLEY, JR. Ordained Sept. 3, 1747. Died March 19, 1758.

JOHN LATHROP. Ordained May 18, 1768. Died Jan. 4, 1816.

HENRY WARE, JR. Ordained Jan. 1, 1817. Resigned Sept. 26, 1830.

RALPH W. EMERSON. Ordained March 11, 1829. Resigned Oct. 28, 1832.

CHANDLER ROBBINS. Ordained Dec. 4, 1833. Resigned Dec. 4, 1874.

ROBERT LAIRD COLLIER. Installed March 15, 1876. Resigned Sept. 25, 1878.

EDWARD A. HORTON. Installed May 24, 1880.

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S. A. Green
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THE interest recently awakened in historical matters, particularly in the ecclesiastical history of our New England Churches, has induced the Standing Committee of The Second Church in Boston to collect and place in some permanent form an inventory of the most important Records and Documents connected with our own ancient organization.

We have availed ourselves of the services of Dr. FRANCIS H. BROWN, an officer of the Church, who has cheerfully given us the aid which is furnished in the accompanying pages.

The action of the Committee appears in the following vote : —

Boston, March 26, 1889.

Voted, That the thanks of the Committee be conveyed by the chairman to Dr. BROWN for the very thorough and interesting character of the Report, and for his labors in preparing the same ; also that he be requested to consent to the printing of the Report, such being the special desire of the Committee.

Boston, April, 1888.

F. W. LINCOLN, JR., Esq.

Clerk of the Second Church.

DEAR SIR, — In reply to your letter of February 18, in which you convey the vote of the Standing Committee, asking me to state the character and condition of the Records and similar books belonging to THE SECOND CHURCH, with their place of deposit, I beg leave to make the following Report.

The Records may properly be placed under the following heads : —

The Records of the Church Proper, — in care of the Deacons.
 The Records of the Corporation and Standing Committee, — in charge of the Standing Committee.
 The Records of the Sunday School, the Ladies' Benevolent Society, the Second Church Branch of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches, of the Charity Committee, and of other organizations.

1. The first volume of Church Records is partly in the handwriting of John Mayo, the first minister of the Church, and the earliest entry is dated 21st 6^{mo} 1662, providing for the payment of the Pastor, Teacher, and leading Elder. At page 63 commences a list of church members, beginning with 1663 and continued by other hands to 1741. A considerable part of the book is taken up with accounts of payments to Mr. Mayo, etc., with an occasional record of business transacted at meetings of "the brethren," receipts signed by Mayo, Gibson, etc. Some pages and parts of pages have been cut out by unknown parties, perhaps for autographs.

2. The second volume bears the inscription "Ex dono fratris Samuelis, Cotton Mathero, in D^{næ} Richards ædib. hospitanti hunc librum humanissima illa Domina dedit 16^d viii^m 1682." It contains a transcript of the list of communicants, the same as contained in the previous volume, and is in the handwriting of Cotton Mather and Joshua Gee. The first record is, —

On 5^d 4^m 1650 the Second Church of Christ in Boston was gathered. The Brothers that first embodied were

MICHAEL POWEL.	JOHN PHILIPS.
JAMES ASHWOOD.	GEORGE DAVIS.
CHRISTOPHER GIBSON.	MICHAEL WILLS.
JOHN FARNHAM.	

To these were soon added

JOHN MAYO, etc.

Cotton Mather seems not to have continued his little book after 1717; but to have made his entries in book No. 4 after about 1717; the smaller book is written back to that date by Gee, and continued to its full extent, 31. 11. 1741.

3. The third volume is in the hand of Increase and Cotton Mather, — the first record being dated 8. 9. 1673. The volume contains many historical accounts of interest. The first record speaks of the delinquency which allowed twenty years to pass after the organization of the Society without any book of records. It contains an account of the gathering of the church, 5. 4. 1650. The first covenant is given, — censures, dismissions, building a new house of worship; lists of church members follow, baptisms, and general church history.

4. The fourth volume embraces the period from 8. 10. 1689 to 24. 12. 1716, and is probably in the handwriting of Cotton Mather. The volume also contains a record of those who were “received into (half way) covenant,” beginning January 15. 1692–3, when this ordinance was first instituted in the church.

5. The fifth volume is in the handwriting of Cotton Mather, from 1717 to 1723; of Joshua Gee from March 1, 1724, to 25. 8. 1741, — contains lists of baptisms, admissions, etc., with various items regarding the Scarlett and other legacies. A full account of the Scarlett legacy is to be found in the record book of the Treasurer of the Church Proper, on pp. 70 *et seq.*

6. In book six Gee’s record continues to 31. 11. 1747; Checkley’s then commences; his last record is 21 May, 1765; Lathrop’s begins 18 May, 1768, and continues to his death, 4 January, 1816. The “meeting preliminary to the Communion” and the “Questions” originated 1 January, 1773. The New Brick Church united with the Second Church 27 June, 1779. Reference is made to the

books in the hands of the Treasurer and Clerk for more full particulars.

7. The seventh volume, in Lathrop's handwriting, contains covenants of marriage, communion, and baptism, with registers of marriages and deaths during his ministry from May 18, 1768, to his death, 4 January, 1816.

8. Volume eight is a copy of former records, made about 1741, and is continued to a later date. During the occupation of the town by the British troops in 1775-76 the church was burned, and probably a part of the records; the people began to worship with the congregation of the New Brick, 31 March, 1776; the formal union between the two churches took place in 1779. One record states: "N. B. The records of admissions and baptisms from 1741 to 1768 were generally lost or destroyed in the time of the war." . . . "1775. From the 19 of April, when the war began, to the 31 March, 1776, there are no records. The church was scattered and the Old North Meeting House was destroyed."

9. A volume of records (ninth) extends from the death of Dr. Lathrop to the calling of Mr. Robbins, Oct. 27, 1833, including the pastorates of Ware and Emerson. The Scarlett Legacy was considered in 1828-29. Lists of admissions, marriages, baptisms, and deaths are given. On May 11, 1718, is noted the death of Paul Revere, at the age of eighty-three. A memorandum, in Dr. Robbins's handwriting, at the close of the volume, reads: "N. B. The records of the Church from the Commencement of my ministry have been transferred to another book. C. R."

10. The volume alluded to by Dr. Robbins contains the records for the period of his pastorate, including the records of marriages and admissions. The volume was received by the Deacons from his widow.

11. In 1881 the undersigned, in behalf of the Deacons, opened a new volume of records, which will be continued. It contains lists of the Ministers, Deacons, and Treasurers

of the Corporation, together with lists of baptisms, marriages, deaths, and admissions, from the date of the installation of Dr. Collier, March 15, 1876.

12. Another volume contains certain of the minutes of the New Brick Church from November, 1719 (or 1720), until June 27, 1779. The plan of union and the action of the two societies is given in full. It is not easy to understand why the records are continued under the name "New Brick Church" throughout the volume and to the year 1803. The volume begins: "A Journal of the votes and other proceedings of the Proprietors of the New Brick meeting house in Boston. Sundrey of the North Ende of the Town being moved by the Providence of God for to Buld a House for the publick Worship of God met sundrey Times for the promoting of y^e work," etc. It gives the history of the land on which the New Brick stood. The names of the twenty-four who purchased the land are cited. On page 64 occurs this record: "Hear ends the Records of the New Brick Society, and ouer leaf, page 68, begins the Records of the United Churches from June 27, 1779, the day on which the Union took place, and hereafter the Records of the 2^d church in Boston." On page 68: "Boston, May 6th, 1779, Begins the Records of the Old North and New Brick societys takeing som proper steps in order to bring on a peaceable and happy union of boath said churches and congregations under the pastoral care of Rev^d Mr. John Lathrop, who now preaches to boath Societys in the New Brick Meeting House," etc.

13. The Book of the Treasurer of the Church Proper commences Nov. 1, 1813, and is in use at the present time. Attached to the account-book is a memorandum, giving full description of the plate now belonging to the Church. The writer of this report has a set of copies of the coats-of-arms, inscriptions, etc., from the plate, taken off by an engraver, and also a set of heliotypes, made from the same engravings and given him by Mr. John H. Buck, of the

Gorham Manufacturing Company of New York. These heliotypes have been inserted by Mr. Buck in his book, issued this year, on "Old Plate."

14. A book was commenced by Henry Barry, Secretary, 28 April, 1844, being the record of the Church Proper, — especially of the devotional meetings held for many years on the Friday before the Communion. Long accounts of the services at these meetings, with the remarks of the Pastor, are given. The book is in use at the present day.

15. A volume of Standing Committee records of the New Brick Church begins 26 Jan., 1801, and ends 9 Dec., 1824.

16. A record of the Standing Committee of the Second Church and society begins 5 Jan., 1825, and ends 30 April, 1845.

17. A volume of Standing Committee records begins 1 May, 1845, and ends 15 Jan., 1872.

18. Still another volume of the committee is now in use.

19. A volume of Proprietors' Records begins at the Annual Meeting of the "New Brick Society," 3 May, 1804. Dr. Lathrop's name, however, occurs in this first record. This overrunning of the two names may imply that they were used interchangeably, or that the corporate organization of the New Brick was kept up for some time after the two parishes actually united. The volume ends 26 Jan., 1845, with the appointment of a committee to petition the Legislature to change the name of the church from "The Second Church and Society of Boston" to "Second Church."

20. The next volume begins with the act of the Legislature to change the name, as indicated above; it was approved by Governor Briggs, 22 Feb., 1845. The last record is dated 18 April, 1873.

21. A third volume of Proprietors' Records is now in use. On a fly-leaf of the second volume is this record :

“Mr. Harris never delivered any but this book to me; said he had no others. This fact has been stated to the Standing Committee before, by

T. W. HERRICK, *P. Clerk.*

May 20, 1851.”

22. The Records of the Treasurers of the Corporation are in the hands of the present Treasurer.

Volumes of records and of accounts of the Treasurers and Secretaries of the Sunday School, the Evangelical Treasury, the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches, the Ladies' Benevolent Society, the Young People's Fraternity, and the Friendly Workers, are in possession of the officers of these organizations.

In the room over the Pastor's room, in the present church edifice, is a chest containing a number of old account-books and sundry files, apparently not of much value.

23. A new Registry of the Sunday School has been recently opened, and is now in use.

24. A few leaves of legal cap are taken up by a Register-Book containing, —

“I. A brief Introductory Account of y^e Founding a Library for the Second Church of Christ in Boston.

II. The names of the Benefactors, with an account of what they bestow.

III. A catalogue of the books as they stand in their respective classes.”

On the first page occurs —

“Secundæ Christi apud Bostonum Nov. Anglorum Ecclesiæ Bibliothecale ex dono D. Nathanielis Belknap Bibliop. Bostonens.”

At this time, in connection with this report, it seems proper to invite the attention of the members of the Standing Committee, not in their official capacity, but as a part of the Society, to the advisability of putting into permanent printed form the Records of the Second Church

Proper, — including the names of those who have been connected with it, as shown by the lists of baptisms, marriages, deaths, and admissions. The plan, thus proposed, has commended itself to several historic parishes in our midst. As an example of this custom there is submitted herewith a volume containing transcripts of the records of the Third Church in Boston, generally known as the Old South Church. The very valuable Registers of admissions to the Church, as will be seen, are accurately copied, many important historical facts are brought out, and the records of many old Boston families are preserved. It is to be understood that this Register of the Third Church will form one volume of the history of the Church, and that another volume will be added within a few years. The Old South proposes to continue, at intervals, the printing of its other registers, — of baptisms, marriages, and burials, — and of *all its valuable papers*, until the whole of its archives are put beyond the danger of destruction by fire, by being embalmed in enduring print. The volume of the history of King's Chapel, with a second volume, soon to follow, is to be supplemented by a volume of the Registers. As a portion of this record, a new transcript of the King's Chapel Epitaphs, more complete and more accurate than that of Bridgham, has been already made. More or less complete copies of Records of the Church in Brattle Square, and other historical churches, have been made or are being made for early publication.

It should be remembered that the early ecclesiastical history of New England is the history of the country. The churches held in their body the best men of the period ; and the history of the colonial and provincial periods, of which Boston is so justly proud, emanated, in a great degree, from the very men who were, in their day, the pillars of the Church.

It seems eminently proper that The Second Church in Boston, — the church of the Mathers, of Lathrop, Ware,

Emerson, Robbins, — which included the families of Alcott Byles, Checkley, Cotton, Fothergill, Frizzell, Gee, Greenough, Governor Hutchinson, Lincoln, Mountford, Revere, Saltonstall, Townsend, and many others, should be in the front rank in this good work. There are competent persons ready to assist us *now*, — with their hands, their skill, their advice. We have many members of our old parish, — happily still with us, — who must pass away before long, and new members will have less enthusiasm and less interest in the time-honored Records of our historic Church.

The excellent work done by the Record Commissioners of the city of Boston comes forcibly to mind in this connection, and their nineteen volumes of our local history rescue from the chance of oblivion, and place in the hands of historical workers, a vast amount of the most valuable records of the town.

The plan which I should recommend for the action of the Society is that so well employed by other churches, — to employ a skilled copyist, accustomed to such work, to have a complete transcript of a large part of what I have described as the “Church Record books,” and that the material be placed in the hands of printers, also accustomed to an undertaking of this kind. I think the expense of preparing and printing a book of this kind would be not far from two thousand dollars. I would recommend that the church itself make a subscription say of one third this amount, and that the payment of the remainder be secured from members and friends of the Church.

Respectfully submitted,

FRANCIS H. BROWN.

Boston, November 20, 1888.

Since writing the above report, there have been added to the collection of books : —

25. The Old North Communion and Poor's stock, 1734–1813, evidently the predecessor of No. 13 in the above list. On its fly-leaf it has a list of the church plate in 1720.

26. This book has to do with the Freeman Place Chapel episode.

27. Ladies Charitable Sewing Circle, I.

28. Rev. Mr. Horton's visiting list for 1882, giving list of members of the parish of that time.

35–43. In the early part of the year the Deacons received from Miss Annette Rogers, daughter of the late Mr. Henry B. Rogers, all the books and papers of the Church of the Saviour. This church, organized in 1845, had drawn away many from the Church of the Disciples who disagreed with the Pastor of that church on certain points; it continued as a separate organization for nine years, and then became merged with The Second Church, bringing to us the families of Rogers, Fearing, Burrage, Ware, Prince, and many others whom we most highly prize. The books are now given to the Deacons of the Second Church for permanent preservation. They are numbered as in the margin.

On the 5th of the current month the Deacons of the Church procured a suitable trunk, gathered all the volumes above named, and placed them in the storage warehouse on West Chester Park. In addition, there are enclosed with them such of the files of papers as possess historic value or seem otherwise worthy of care.

FRANCIS H. BROWN.

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